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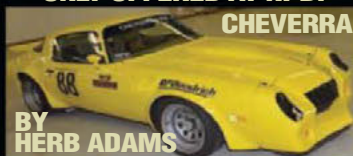
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» ON THE COVER

As the G-machine/Pro Touring movement continues to evolve, cars like Lonny Moore's 1973 Camaro slightly buck the trend and favor big-block power instead of the more common LS package. Check out the full feature on page 16.

Photo by Grant Cox

» TOC

Sam Mattox built a show-quality street machine, but opts out of the trailer portion when it comes to showing off his stunning 1967 Chevelle. He'd much rather drive it than tow it.

See more on page 32.

Photo by Robert McGaffin.



SPECIAL FEATURE

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FIRING UP

Nick Licata NLicata@enthusiastnetwork.com



Respect The Sixth-Gen

As I sit down to bang keys on this month's editorial, it's May 18, 2015, and GM has just revealed the brand-new 2016 Camaro, also referred to as the sixth-gen. Needless to say, people on social media sites have lit the car up like a California forest fire in September.

And just like when GM pulled the black sheet off the fifth-gen Camaro back in 2009, the "keyboard jockeys" shined bright with their knee-jerk reaction by posting their displeasure of the body styling with an array of colorful expletives, many of which are not suitable for this publication. Amazingly, many of the social media "Mensa-type's" negative comments regarding the just-released sixth-gen Camaro tended to circle back to "how much better" the fifth-gen is. Seriously?

So, what I'm taking from this whole thing is that people don't like change, and once the seventh-gen comes out, the same "Twitterbookers" will most likely praise the "almighty" sixth-gen. It's crazy, I know, but apparently muscle car people tend to embrace nostalgia much more than modernization.

Heck, I remember when the 2014 Camaro went through a subtle redesign

with the front fascia and taillights. Once again the vocal minority expressed their displeasure with the change citing the taillights looked too similar to that of the Corvette. I kinda like them, but that's just me.

The way I see it, we should be grateful that American-made late-model muscle cars are still in production. In this day and age with strict new-car government mandates regarding high fuel mileage and low emissions standards, the fact that we can turn the key of a number of brand-new factory-built hot rods that make a ton of smile-inducing horsepower is truly amazing.

Speaking of which, the 2016 Camaro will be offered with three engine options: a 275hp 2.0L turbocharged four-cylinder; a 335hp 3.6L V-6, which comes with the base model; and—for obvious reasons—our interests lie with the SS, which will be

loaded with 455 hp and 455 lb-ft of torque busting out of a direct-injected LT1 6.2L V-8. Coming in about 200 pounds lighter and equipped with a few more ponies than its predecessor, we can only assume the 2016 ride will feel a bit more agile and quicker than the 426hp fifth-gen.

With that said, I'm on the fence regarding it being referred to as the sixth-gen. Yes, it's on the Alpha platform, which is a bit lighter and offers 28-percent more rigidity opposed to the fifth-gen's Zeta chassis, but the exterior exhibits such subtle changes, my initial thoughts are that visually, it's merely a freshened up design of the fifth-gen.

Regardless of what we call it, I'm giving the 2016 Camaro SS the benefit of the doubt. It looks great, has plenty of what I like to call "consumer-grade" horsepower and suspension components, and with all the aftermarket companies jumping on board to create superior handling and performance enhancers, no doubt this car can be transformed into an absolute monster. And if a newer ZL1 and Z/28 are on the way ... watch out!

But, good luck getting me behind the wheel of the four-cylinder version; turbo or not, one of the appealing aspects of a Camaro is its bark. I've always said that a major part of the driving experience includes the aggressive sound of a V-8 engine, and if you try to sell me on a Camaro that sounds like a Miata, I'm out.

So, before we give Chevrolet's latest muscle car offering a social media beatdown, let's give it a fighting chance. I propose that, at the very least, you head on down to the nearest Chevy dealer and take one out for a "spirited" drive. This will enable you to have a more educated opinion of the sixth-generation Camaro. And wouldn't it mean a lot more if your opinion was based on something besides what you've read on the Internet?

You in?



>The body style of the 2016 Camaro doesn't look entirely far off from the fifth-gen, but we're betting the lighter, stiffer chassis, along with the additional horsepower will offer a more exciting ride.
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SPOTLIGHT

❖ TEXT & PHOTOS: **Bruce Biegler**

Chevelle Excellence

»When racing fans attending NMCA events get a close-up look at the 1969 Chevelle campaigned by Rick Hornback, they always come away impressed. Not only is the big-block-powered machine highly impressive to watch on the racetrack (has run 9.08 e.t.'s at 149 mph), its detail and finish are truly meticulous. Based out of Brownsburg, Indiana, Rick runs his car primarily within the NMCA Open Comp class as well as in the regional Quick Stick class for the UMTR (United Manual Transmission Racers), a circuit for which he is the 2014 defending champion. Powered by an all-aluminum 565ci mill, it features machine work and heads by Steve Schmidt Competition Engines in Indianapolis. The car has a mini-tub and full 'cage that was installed by Pro-Tree Racecars – also based in Indiana. Great care was taken while constructing the car to maintain its original design and street-legal



status. Rick reports that his car has had a long evolution with family history dating back to 1978 when he first acquired it while in high school at age 16. Primary sponsorship for Rick's team (which also includes his wife, Twila; son Tyler; daughter Shelby; and crew members Rob Wetnight and Brent and Steven Wright) comes from American Structurepoint (an Engineering/Architectural firm) where he is employed.

A Fascinating Fifty-Five

»Within North America's extremely vast field of Top Sportsman class cars, some entries stand alone. That is certainly the case for the stunning 1955 Chevy Bel Air conceived and constructed by veteran racer Bob Mandell from Tennessee. First debuted during 2014, Mandell's 7/8th scale "Super Bel Air" is just the latest in a long line of custom Chevrolet creations from Mandell's solely owned Pro-Fab Race Car facility located in Culleoka, Tennessee (south of Nashville). Power comes from a self-built 792ci Chevrolet engine program, which has a Speedtech three-stage nitrous system. That engine is contained within a 100-percent custom-fabricated round



chrome-moly tube chassis. The car has proven to be very prompt on the dragstrip too, having run a best of 6.51 at 212+ mph. Featuring spectacularly innovative and intimate detailing both around the exterior and within the interior, all the credit goes to Mandell along with his two sons, Bob III and Jeff. So far the car has been a winner both on and off the track. In 2014, just one

week after construction was completed he took First place in his class at the Detroit Autorama, and then in the 2014 fall season, Bob had a remarkable run when he won the Top Sportsman eliminator at back-to-back NHRA event races held in Columbus, Ohio (Jegs Northern SPORTSNationals) and in St. Louis (AAA Insurance NHRA Midwest Nationals).

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Cagnazzi's COPO Consortium

»Dynamic NHRA team manager Victor Cagnazzi, who is from New York City, has chosen a new path for his drag racing. Following many seasons and very successful stints within NHRA Pro Stock racing with a variety of Chevrolet cars, Cagnazzi has shifted his focus to an impressive multicar Camaro Sportsman racing team owned by Gray Motorsports. After first aligning himself with team owner Johnny Gray and then with Sportsman racer Jeff Strickland (who is from Alabama), they are campaigning a pair of COPO Camaros and have plans to roll a third and then a fourth car into the fold sometime this season. Victor drives a 2015 COPO, which features a 427ci (NHRA rated 450hp) engine program specially built at Gray Motorsports' facility in North Carolina. Jeff is wheeling a 2014 COPO, which has a 350ci (NHRA rated 350hp) engine program direct from Chevrolet Performance. For 2015, Victor's focus is within the Factory Stock Showdown class, while Jeff's target is more conventional Stock Eliminator and NHRA's regional and national



points chase. To date, Cagnazzi's car has run a best of 8.80 at 154 mph, while Jeff's machine has a best e.t. of 10.17 at 131. In the near future, Jeff will also be tasked to drive the third car, which is another big-block COPO intended primarily for Factory Stock Showdown (this is the Grumpy's Toy tribute car formerly driven by Dave Connolly and owned by Gray Motorsports). All race cars are owned by and are based out of the Gray Motorsports facility in Mooresville, North Carolina, however, during the racing season Jeff maintains his machine from his own shop in Alabama. The fast-rising race team is backed by two very significant and highly appreciated primary sponsors: GMPartsNow.com and Berger Chevrolet (Grand Rapids, Michigan).

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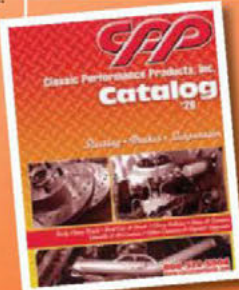
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RIDES

BIG-BLOCK SECOND REDEFINES OLD SCHOOL

Lonny Toons

◆ TEXT: Ro McGonegal | PHOTOS: Grant Cox



➔ **This little saga** began decades ago and was not without some sibling rivalry. It seems Lonny's dad bought his son's high-school Camaro ... and used it as a trade towards a '57 Corvette he was building for Lonny's sister Lynette. "I always wanted that car back, but I never could afford it," Lonny confessed. "About 36 years later, I got the chance to finally get one and modify it in a manner that meets today's cool standards."

Being the master and commander of Lonny Moore's Collision Repair (Wichita, Kansas) was at least serendipitous and made a great difference in the expediency of the build. Lonny had a ready staff that included family clan Kyle, Larry, and Lynn Moore who were abetted by pal Bret Loibl. Kyle did the bodywork and paint; Larry thrashed the suspension, and Lynn's opinions on the process were respected by all. Bret is the electrician.

OLD-GEN SCHOOL



Lonny has his opinions, too. To him, the unique features of his car are the big-block engine, the paint, the modified valance, and the rollcage. He could recoup on the metalwork, the paintjob, and some of the ancillary functions and he saved on the engine, too. It's a modified 454 H.O. crate, but not much. But hell, it's a big-block

and that speaks volumes. It presents a modern image now, replete with FAST throttle body EFI on the stock GM intake manifold. Under the OE air cleaner, the engine looks like it still carries a carburetor.

Some minor modifications followed, but they were more for ease of operation than an increase in power.

As is, the 454 has plenty of raw meat: it has a forged rotating assembly and a rather low compression ratio, making it a good boy for a forced-air application, should the psychic need arise. Lonny tends it with a four-row AFco core that also houses a transmission fluid cooler. He gave it an MSD ignition system, Sanderson

Big-Block Second-Gen Redefines Old School



headers, and Flowmaster 50 Series mufflers. The remainder of the exhaust tract was erected by American Muffler in Wichita.

Considering the creature comforts he's got, it's evident that Lonny likes to drive, sometimes long down the road, so an overdriven top gear was imperative. Wichita's celebrated Neal Chance built him a 700-R4, and a 2,500-stall converter to go with it.

Prior to any changes within the car, Bob Bills constructed a six-point rollcage for safety as much as for the torsional rigidity it affords. Lonny's expertise gravitates to a gentle mix of form as well as function. He spent lots of time arranging the interior and had a host of help doing it. Electric head Bret rewired the Camaro and installed the cheap (Lonny's word) stereo system and affixed the colony of Auto Meter instruments. Over at 447 Rock Island North, Scott Downey was in full rock and roll mode as he attacked the interior, fabbing the console, laying down the Daytona weave carpet, reforming the rear seat and stitching it to match the leather-sheathed Recaro seats, the door panels, and the package tray. That big round thing in the middle of it all is a Budnik V2.

There's more to it, of course. On the assignment gig, Editor Nick tagged this car as Pro Touring, but certainly the package was tailored to Lonny's vision, be that strictly Pro Touring or not. Larry Moore anchored the almighty suspension at the stock original uprights and then added RideTech stuff: tubular control arms and shock absorbers surrounded by DSE coilover springs. To eliminate the binding inherent in the OE leaf spring bundles and to locate the new parts, he





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BRAKES



SUSPENSION



Big-Block Second-Gen Redefines Old School



used a RideTech four-link system, supporting the Moser axle with RideTech adjustable dampers captured by coil springs. American Muffler got busy again, this time with Wilwood disc brakes to burn off energy, 14-inches in front followed by 12-inch plates.

Now, the curious thing about this Camaro is its rims and tires. Though not the mondo combo usually common to aspiring Pro Tourers, a trick of light, carefully chosen wheel offset, a rim sympathetic to the cause, and the world's most bitchin' stance creates a near optical illusion. Certainly, the Budnik V2 18x8 and 18x11 rims (4.25-inch and 5.00-inch b/s, respectively) are big enough, but the Pilot Sports are very conservative: 225/35 and 275/30. Queer thing is that the combination appears to be larger than that. Regardless, the effect is as stunning as the Camaro's creepy-crawly stance and the body that has been dropped 4 inches.

To put this car in the realm of doable, Lonny and clan simply did the best with what they had, cleaned it up, made it presentable, and then went on to a more pertinent project. In other words, it isn't anywhere near show quality—because that



notion has never produced an ounce of performance. The territory under the hood is the original wasteland, no attempt at smoothing, hiding, or replacing equipment with something more

modern. The battery is still over the right front wheel. The A/C compressor is original. Hoses and wires are hither and yon, seemingly random. But when the AFco core/transmission fluid cooler went in, Lonny amended it with a support panel that at once covers the equipment and lends torsional strength to the critical radiator core area.

Moore's Collision Repair smoothed the sheetmetal slick, buffed up the grille section and added the rolled pan and the RS/Z28 bumperettes (re-chromed by Advanced Plating, Nashville) prior to Lonny lapping it in Sherwin-Williams Viper Red. And even if you own the paint jail, that's no guarantee that your sentence will be reduced. Lonny and the Moore clan obviously fit the Camaro between paying jobs, hence a three-year gestation. But it was worth it. Lonny says his most memorable experiences in it were the moments he autocrossed it at a Goodguys event.

No word on Lynette's Corvette. **CHP**

TECH CHECK

Owner: Lonny Moore, Wichita, Kansas
Vehicle: 1973 Camaro

Engine

- Type:** GM 1981 Mark IV H.O., 4-bolt main bearings
- Displacement:** 454 ci
- Compression Ratio:** 8.75:1
- Bore:** 4.25 inches
- Stroke:** 4.00 inches
- Cylinder Heads:** GM iron, rectangular port, 118cc combustion chambers, 2.19/1.88 valves
- Rotating Assembly:** Forged steel crankshaft and connecting rods, forged aluminum pistons
- Valvetrain:** 1.7:1 stamped steel rocker arms, roller lifters
- Camshaft:** GM hydraulic (0.510/0.540-inch lift, 211/230-degree duration at 0.050)
- Induction:** GM intake manifold, FAST throttle body and EFI, Holley fuel pump
- Ignition:** MSD
- Exhaust:** Sanderson headers w/ 1 7/8-inch primaries, 2 1/2-inch aluminum-coated system, Flowmaster 50 Series mufflers
- Output (at crankshaft):** 425 hp at 5,250 rpm, 500 lb-ft at 3,250 rpm

Drivetrain

- Transmission:** Chance Transmission (Wichita, Kansas) 700-R4 and 2,500-stall converter
- Rear Axle:** Moser, limited-slip, 3.73:1 gears, Power Driver driveshaft

Chassis

- Front Suspension:** GM spindles, RideTech control arms with 2-inch drop, RideTech adjustable shocks, DSE 2-inch drop springs
- Rear Suspension:** DSE frame connectors, RideTech springs and adjustable shocks, 4-inch drop overall
- Brakes:** Wilwood 14-inch vented rotors, front; 12-inch rotors, rear

Wheels & Tires

- Wheels:** Budnik V2; 18x8 front, 18x11 rear
- Tires:** Michelin Pilot Sport; 225/35 front, 275/30 rear

Interior

- Upholstery:** Scott Downey at Downey's Auto Upholstery (Park City, Kansas)
- Material:** Leather
- Seats:** Recaro with RaceQuip harnesses
- Steering:** Budnik V2 wheel
- Shifter:** Lokar Nite Series, 6-inch stick
- Dash:** Insert by Bret Loibl
- Instrumentation:** Auto Meter
- Console:** Custom-built by Scott Downey
- Audio:** Alpine head unit, front/rear speakers installed by Bret Loibl
- Rollcage:** 6-point built by Bob Bills
- HVAC:** Refurbished Four-Seasons factory system

Exterior

- Bodywork:** Lonny Moore's Collision Repair (Park City, Kansas)
- Painter:** Lonny Moore
- Paint:** Sherwin-Williams Viper Red
- Hood:** Stock
- Grille:** Stock
- Bumpers:** '70-'73 RS/Z28, chrome by Advanced Plating

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IN THE RIGHT ORDER

The Step-by-Step ABCs to Body & Paint

✦ TEXT: **John Gilbert** | PHOTOS: **Calin Head**

Right from the very start when C. Hopkins Rod & Custom, also known as the AMD Installation Center, in Cleveland, Georgia, undertook the complete body restoration of this 1969 Camaro, the key to getting it right was following GM's correct order of assembly.

This time around we're taking an in-depth look at how Hot Rods & Hobbies in Signal Hill, California, painted the '69 Camaro, adhering to the "in the right order" principle. The first step was to assemble the Camaro and ensure that all of the gaps were correct. This meant how the hood fit to the fenders and up against the cowl. From the gap at the rear of the front fenders to the front of the doors, the fit was checked, and then the gap from the rear door edges to the rear quarter-panels.

After making sure all the body lines (gaps) were right on the money, it was OK to disassemble the car and move onto priming and painting the car. A total advancement in technology from how cars were primed in the '60s, Axalta Cromax LE3004S was laid down followed with Chroma Seal LE 3070S dark gray sealer. Just saying priming and painting makes it sound simple, but there's a lot of steps to priming a car and getting the body straight before Hot

Rods & Hobbies could move onto paint. Especially since the Camaro is going into black—the hardest color to prepare for paint since it reveals even the tiniest imperfection.

In keeping with a state-of-the-art approach in place of the Camaro's factory original single stage Tuxedo Black Magic Mirror acrylic lacquer topcoat, Hot Rod's & Hobbies finished with a deeper, glossier, two-stage Axalta Cromax Pro basecoat with an Axalta Premier Clear LE 8700S topcoat. The result is a totally custom finish that far exceeds what the factory turned out in the 20th century. **CHP**



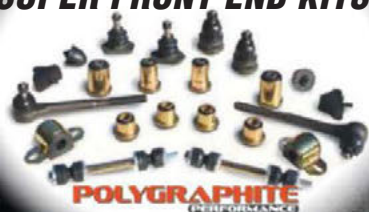
01 | After using aircraft paint stripper to remove old paint, it is absolutely essential to neutralize the leftover film. Otherwise acidic bubbles will form under the new paintjob and eventually rise to the top as unsightly blemishes.



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02 | In addition to creating a high-end custom look, installing Eddie Motorsports CNC-machined billet hood hinges provided increased adjustability and simplified establishing the hood gaps.



03 | Notice that after the hood has been properly adjusted, with the gaps corrected, the hood sits perfectly flat, and thanks to precision hinges will continue to fit properly even after many openings.



04 | To establish the gaps, sometimes metal has to be ground down while other times TIG welding has to be done in order to build an area up.



05 | This close-up view reveals how TIG welding a thin metal strip helps to form a tighter, more consistent gap between the front fender and driver-side door.

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06 | This overall view of the passenger-side door after the gaps have been corrected through TIG welding and grinding illustrates how much nicer intense attention to detail makes the car appear.

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In the Right Order



07 | The OEM or a garden-variety body shop solution to filling the roof seams would be to use lead or polyester filler, respectively.



08 | Custom shops such as Hot Rods & Hobbies build to higher coach craft standards, so they TIG-welded in fabricated metal filler strips in place of lead or thick polyester filler.



09 | A very thin skim coat of polyester filler is often used to perfectly flatten the steel body panels.



10 | With the bare steel properly treated, the entire body was sprayed with Cromax LE3004S, a two-component 2K primer surfacer designed to provide high build and then easy to sand.



11 | Notice that after a few passes with a long sanding block the black mist known as a guidecoat continues to remain only where the low areas are. This indicates where more blocking is needed. Repeatedly, the entire car was primed, guidecoated, and blocked until the low spots were eliminated.

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- 1982-87 Malibu
- 1990-92 Camaro
- 1978-81 Monte Carlo
- 1964-65 Chevelle
- 1982-87 Monte Carlo
- 1966 (late)-67 Chevelle
- 1962-65 Nova (Chevy II)
- 1968 Chevelle
- 1966-67 Nova
- 1969 Chevelle
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12 | A perfectly flat stick wrapped with sandpaper is used by the more exacting body shops to ensure the area is absolutely wave free (low spots).



13 | A cylindrical hard-foam sanding block wrapped with sandpaper works great to sand areas that need to be shaped to a perfectly rounded configuration.



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14 | Now completely blocked smooth, the body is ready for paint. A tack rag along with compressed air was used to ensure the surface was free from dust and dirt that would produce blemishes trapped in the paint.



15 | To ensure good coverage around the window frames, under the rocker panels, and inside the doorjams and wheelwells those areas were sprayed with black Axalta Cromax Pro basecoat first. Then, the overall starting point was at the roof.



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In the Right Order



16 After completing the roof, the next move was to the top side of the trunk area and then the quarter-panels. The main idea is start at the top and then work down. This lessens the possibility of getting dirt in the paint.



17 Applying the second stage, Axalta Premier Clear LE8700S clearcoat must be done within a certain window of time. Any nubs in the basecoat can be removed by lightly scuffing them with a Scotchbrite pad. Blown and tacked once again, it's time to hose on the clear.



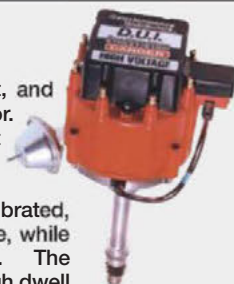
18 Slicking clear is a process that requires a good eye to watch it hit, and the arms of a robot to move at a consistent, semi-rapid pace. This car probably came out incredible right from the gun, but it was color-sanded and rubbed to make it perfect.



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Performance Distributors has applied their ignition expertise to the 348-409 engines with their new D.U.I. Distributors for these applications. This new D.U.I. (Davis Unified Ignition) is specifically designed for the 348-409 BB Chevy ("W" Engine). Performance Distributors calibrates the advance curve on a distributor machine to accommodate the timing requirements of these unique engines.



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Performance Distributor's Adjustable Slip Collar D.U.I. Distributor features a slip collar with 7/8" of adjustability. This is great if you have decked your heads or milled your block, which changes the distance between where your distributor rests on the intake and where it meshes with your cam gear. This will insure a precise installation, while preventing engine damage from the distributor being out of alignment.



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This is a small diameter high performance electronic ignition system for engines that do not have the clearance for a D.U.I. Due to the large size of the D.U.I., it will not fit applications utilizing a blower, tunnel ram or where the engine is too close to the firewall. This put our engineers to work using a smaller diameter distributor. The results were the Tri-Power Ignition System. The Tri-Power ignition system features our Dyna Mod (HEI style) electronic module mounted externally to a remanufactured Chevy points style distributor housing. The system also includes our high voltage "Inferno" coil which is mounted externally from the distributor.



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DRIVERS



RIDES

Sam Mattox Doesn't Believe in Trailer Queens. He Drove his Numbers-Matching SS396 Chevelle Through Torrential Rain to Prove it.

♦ TEXT: **Stephen Kim** | PHOTOS: **Robert McGaffin**

➤ **News flash:** Even if you hide your trailer back at the hotel and cruise two blocks to the fairground, no one actually believes that your show car is a real driver. The nipples on the tire tread, bug-free radiator core, and trickle charger stashed in the trunk are dead giveaways. Interestingly, conversations during photo shoots usually involve a car owner bragging about how he drives his car cross-country, leading the photographer to suggest a great photo location down the street, followed by the car owner busting out an enclosed trailer for the half-mile trip.



WANTED





This might explain why our man Robert McGaffin was taken aback when owner Sam Mattox braved the pothole-riddled streets of Detroit to drive his stunning 1967 Chevelle SS through a ferocious thunderstorm. "As we started getting ready to head downtown from the shop to our photo location, the photographer asked 'Where's the trailer?' I told him we didn't have a trailer, and he was stunned to see us drive the car 25 miles each way to the shoot," Sam recalls. What makes the feat even more alarming is that the car in question is a real-deal, numbers-matching SS396 that wears all-original sheetmetal. Obviously, Sam is a no-nonsense kind of guy, a theme that permeates through every nook and cranny of his Chevelle.

Granted that Detroit isn't the vibrant town it used to be, the car culture still runs deep. In fact, some of the most genuine and hard-core hot rodders on



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earth still hail from the Motor City. Although Sam's dad wasn't into the wrenching side of the hobby, he knew a good deal when he saw one and brought the Chevelle home in 1969. Brand loyalty clearly wasn't an issue in the Mattox household, as Sam's mom drove a 1969 Ford Galaxie fastback. Sam still upholds this tradition today with a 3,000-square-foot barn filled with cars ranging from a 1956 Chevy and 1969 Cougar to a 1966 GTO and 1971 Dodge Warlock truck.

That's a lot of cool toys for any one man to have, but as a car that's been in the family for nearly 50 years, the Chevelle represents more than just another project car. When Sam assumed possession of the Chevelle in the late '90s, the ultimate ceiling for the long-neglected A-body seemed quite low. "My brother got the car from my dad in the '80s to restore, and after taking it all apart he never really did anything with it. The car sat completely disassembled until 1997, when I literally picked up all the pieces and decided to put it back together," Sam recalls.

After getting the Chevelle back on the road, Sam happily logged lots of miles on the 396 big-block for several years. Recognizing how rare the original 41,000-mile car had become, Sam crated up the 396 one day and replaced it with a Chevrolet Performance 454 crate engine. The straight-out-of-the-box engine combo inhales through a set of rectangle-port cylinder heads and an Edelbrock

intake manifold, and exhales through Diamond Fabrication 1.875-inch headers and dual 3-inch MagnaFlow mufflers. To improve streetability and fuel mileage, Sam installed an Edelbrock Pro-Flo EFI system. A testament to the durability of good ol' Bow Tie engineering, the original TH400 transmission and 12-bolt rearend are still getting the job done.

By the time 2012 rolled around, Sam wanted to update the suspension and spray the body panels with a quickie paintjob. Obviously, things didn't exactly go as planned. "I was originally going to swap out the springs and shocks, but my friends at Diamond Fabrication talked me into upgrading the entire suspension," says Sam. Tweaks included new Global West control arms, QA1 coilovers, Flaming River steering box, and Wilwood 13-inch disc brakes. To complement the car's aggressive stance, Sam finished things off with Billet Specialties Spline wheels measuring 18x9 up front and 20x10 in the rear. BFGoodrich rubber provides the stick.

With the suspension work complete, the project that Sam thought was coming to a close was actually just beginning. "The guys and Diamond Fabrication talked me into completely restoring the car, so we shipped it off to Cuzie Customs for the paint and bodywork. I'm glad they did, because I don't think I would have been happy without the work they performed on the car," Sam explains. "Cuzie

Customs straightened up the body, closed up the panel gaps to 5 mils, then sprayed it all with a fresh coat of paint. At this point, the original interior looked great, but it didn't match the quality of the rest of the car anymore. Fortunately, Jim Dunn from Reincarnation stepped in to help. I wanted to improve the quality and feel of the interior but retain the factory look. To accomplish this, Jim installed new leather and carbon-fiber inserts everywhere, along with a new Dakota Digital dash."

Not surprisingly, Sam has piled on the miles since finishing the Chevelle's latest restoration, and he even lets his kids borrow the car from time to time. Being the great son that he is, Sam offered to give the car back to his dad. Being the great dad that he is, his old man recognized all the hard work Sam put into it and refused to take it back. "The best part about having restored the Chevelle to this level is that my father is still around to see it," says Sam.

Granted that the Chevelle isn't a show car, but for obvious reasons, it can hold its own on the show-and-shine circuit. It won First Place in its class at the 2013 Detroit Autorama, which is certainly no small feat. Unlike the majority of cars it competed against, however, Sam didn't haul it there in a trailer. "These cars are built to enjoy, not look at," Sam opines. "I have friends that won't even let you get near their cars. If you can't drive them, I don't see the point in building them." **CHP**

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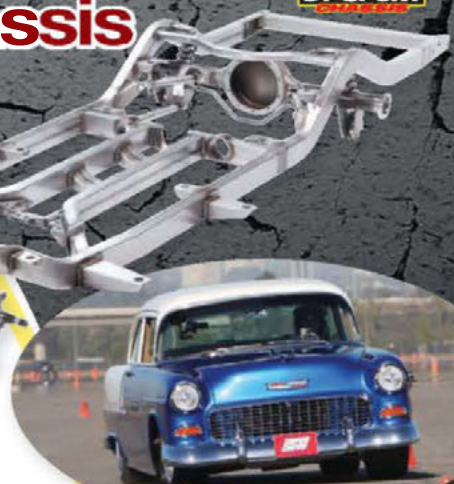


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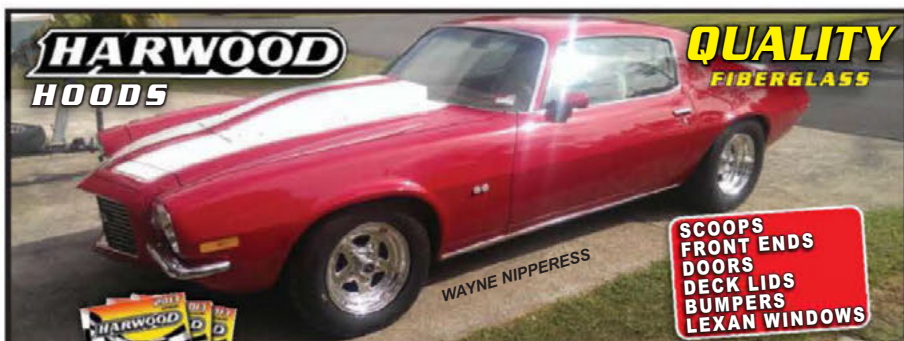
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RPO D90 Hockey Stick Stripes Were Originally Half Paint and Half Vinyl. Here's How to Step Up the Quality With Real Custom Paint

✦ TEXT: **John Gilbert** | PHOTOS: **Calin Head**

Nothing says 1969 Camaro like the distinctive graphic design of the year model's RPO D90 hockey stick stripes. If one were to adhere to replicating the factory procedure faithfully it would be Fisher Body applying 3M vinyl stripes to the doors and the Chevrolet plant spraying the fender stripes with DuPont Magic Mirror acrylic lacquer.

For the guy that wants to remain faithful to the look and feel of factory original, this would be the best way to replicate hockey stripes, but for a truly custom look, nothing beats real paint with a super glossy clear topcoat to bury the artwork beneath.

This is where we had Scott Bonowski at Hot Rods & Hobbies in Signal Hill, California, step in to show *Chevy High Performance's* valued audience how to lay down a set of show-quality hockey stripes and then bury them under

Magic Mirror's latest embodiment Axalta LE8700S clear. For those of you that haven't heard, DuPont Performance Coatings, a paint manufacturer that's been around since the dawn of the automobile age has been rechristened Axalta Coating Systems. So, in effect, the custom D90 stripes Scott laid down are as faithful to 20th century factory original as the 21st century can get. **CHP**



01 | The most difficult part of the job is laying out the hockey stripes freehand to look as they're supposed to appear. To simplify, guide marks can be drawn with a grease pencil and the leading edge of a body line used as a guide to pull the tape in a long line.



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Stick Around

02 | In days of old, masking tape was made from crepe, and it took a true artisan to apply the tape in such a manner that wet paint would not bleed under and create a fuzzy edge. Today's fineline masking tapes are made from a polymer film and it's almost impossible not to get a clean, defined paint edge.



03 | The trick to pulling a straight line is to pull from the elbow and not from the wrist. Notice how the fineline tape parallels the body line.



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04 | Observe how the green 1/2-inch crepe masking tape was stacked four wide to form a 2-inch-wide guide.



05 | Then, 1/8-inch fineline tape was laid parallel to the outside masked edge to serve as a guide.

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Stick Around



06 | Next, 1/8-inch fineline tape was laid alongside the fineline paralleling the outside masked edge, and then the center tape was pulled (removed) to make room to create a 1/8-inch painted pinstripe.



07 | Stand back and look to make sure the lines are straight and not wavy. It takes a trained eye to determine if the artwork is laid out properly and ready for the large areas of negative space to be masked off.



08 | A single-edge razor blade or Exacto knife works well to cut clean, straight lines into the fineline tape.

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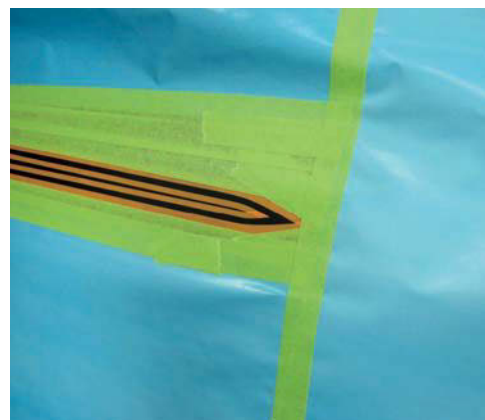
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:Stick Around

09 | In order to protect the black basecoat from silver overspray, Visqueen was spread out over the car.



10 | The paper masking process begins with laying 1/2-inch green crepe masking tape over the outer edge of the 1/4-inch fineline. This is to avoid leaving gaps exposed for unwanted paint to seep or be sprayed into.



11 | Intricate detailed areas such as the pointed end of the hockey stick at the door's end are taped down heavily to ensure crisp lines. To prevent paint bleeding under the taped lines, it's a good idea right before painting to use a thumb or fingertips and firmly rub (press) the fineline.



12 | The final check before painting the hockey stripes is to stand away at a distance to eyeball (determine) if the graphics look right.

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:Stick Around



13 | To help eliminate the possibility of dirt in the paint or fisheyes occurring is to use a clean, lint-free cloth with a prep solvent (silicone stripper) and wipe the area down.



14 | Next, the area is blown with compressed air and wiped with a tack rag.



15 | The spray pattern of the Axalta silver Cromax Pro was overlapped onto the masking paper to ensure the stripes were fully covered with color.



16 | Once the painted hockey stripes were completely dry, the masking paper was removed from where it attached to the 1/2-inch green crepe masking tape. Then the orange fineline tape was removed by pulling it straight back.



17 | Compressed air along with a lint-free rag and prep solvent was used to prepare the area to be cleared (painted with a clear urethane topcoat).



18 | The hockey stripes were done (laid out and painted) with the car assembled to ensure the artwork (lines) matched up. Then the doors, fenders, and hood were removed and buried under enough Cromax Premier Clear LE8700S to leave the Axalta silver Cromax Pro hockey stripes undetectable to the human touch.

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RIDES

2016 CAMARO IN DEPTH

We Take a Deeper Look Under the Skin of the Gen 6, Thoroughly Modernized Muscle Car

❖ TEXT: **Barry Kluczyk** | PHOTOS: **General Motors**



➤ **Next-generation Camaros** don't come along very often – the 2016 model is only the sixth in the nearly 50 years since the car went into production – so when one does appear, it's an understandably big deal.

It was certainly a big deal when Chevrolet resurrected the car for 2010. The “heritage”-style homage to the iconic first-generation design was an unqualified hit. To date, Gen 5 Camaro sales have surpassed 500,000 and has outsold the Mustang for the past four years. In an age when car buyers are turning increasingly to crossovers, that's no small feat.

We're going to argue, however, that the all-new Gen 6 Camaro is more significant. In our admittedly limited experience with preproduction examples and careful evaluation of the elements comprising it, it's more of a driver's car. We don't mean to cast aspersions on the unquestionably popular Gen 5, but it was a car trimmed to fit an existing platform – one that wasn't originally envisioned as a 21st century ponycar.

In short, it was kind of like a chunky guy buying an off-the-rack sport coat because the party was tonight. The Gen 6 Camaro, on the other hand, appears to be precisely tailored and draped over the chest of somebody who's been taking pilates classes. It's leaner in both appearance and substance, and it's one of the few vehicles these days that can boast it's lighter *and* more powerful than the previous model. Chevrolet says the overall weight loss is more than 200 pounds. That's a pretty significant and welcome reduction that will pay dividends in everything from agility to fuel economy.



➤ Rated at 455 horsepower and 455 lb-ft of torque, the Camaro SS's 6.2L LT1 delivers about 7 percent more power than the Gen 5's LS3, in a car that is significantly lighter. It also employs direct injection, cylinder deactivation, and variable valve timing.



➤ 2016 Camaro styling is evolutionary, with much greater attention to detail than the Gen 5. It has a tauter, shrink-wrapped appearance that is very apparent when viewed in person. You can tell this one is an LT model because it doesn't have the hood vents exclusive to the SS.

➤ One of the Camaro-specific attributes of the LT1 engine is the Tri-Y header design. With it, primary pipe pairings join cylinders one and five, then three and seven on the left bank. Cylinders two and four and six and eight are paired on the right bank. At each bank, the primary pairings collect in a secondary Y, delivering a combination of pulse separation of adjacent firing cylinders and improved scavenging for the LT1 firing order of 1-8-7-2-6-5-4-3.



When it rolls into showrooms at the end of 2015, the new Camaro will be offered only in LT and SS models, with an RS package, too. Chevy won't comment yet on higher-performance variations such as the 1LE, ZL1 and Z/28. The SS, of course, receives the 6.2L LT1 engine, while the LT comes standard with a 2.0L turbo four-cylinder or an optional, all-new iteration of GM's 3.6L naturally aspirated V-6.

More on all of them below, but it's worth noting for anyone having philosophical reservations about a four-cylinder Camaro that at 275 horsepower, it's more powerful than any small-block V-8 offered between 1972 and 1992 – and at 335 horses, the new V-6 flat-out trumps every small-block from 1967 to 2002. Progress can be a wonderful thing.

NEW FOUNDATION

Production of the 2016 Camaro begins later in the year at GM's Lansing Grand River facility, in Michigan. It's the home of the Cadillac ATS and CTS, which is appropriate, because that's the architecture on which the new car is built. Those Caddies have been hailed as dynamic equals or better than German competitors such as the BMW 3-Series, so having that structure as the Camaro's foundation is as good as it gets.

Importantly, about 70 percent of the architectural components are unique to Camaro; and compared to the Gen 5 architecture, structural rigidity has increased 28 percent. The new structure also represents the bulk of the Camaro's weight loss, in everything

from the switch from a steel to aluminum instrument panel frame, to lighter suspension components. They even designed honeycomb-style lightening "holes" in a number of components to save fractions of pounds here and there.

That's all great, but we're more excited about the Camaro's new, multi-link MacPherson strut front suspension, which leverages a double-pivot design that makes those Cadillacs so agile. At the rear, a new five-link independent suspension yields outstanding wheel control and reduces "squat" during acceleration. All-new Drive Mode Selector is offered and tailors up to eight driving attributes for four modes: Snow/Ice, Tour, Sport, and – on SS models – Track.

Chevrolet is also making Magnetic Ride Control available on the Camaro SS for the first time, and all models offer Brembo brakes (they're standard on SS). For the Camaro LT, the available brakes include 12.6-inch front rotors with four-piston calipers and 12.4-inch rear rotors with single-piston sliding calipers. The Camaro SS features 13.6-inch front rotors with four-piston fixed calipers and 13.3-inch rear rotors with four-piston fixed calipers.

Goodyear tires are used on all models: The LT features standard 18-inch wheels wrapped with Goodyear Eagle Sport all-season tires with available 20-inch wheels matched with Eagle F1 Asymmetric all-season run-flat tires as an option. Camaro SS features standard 20-inch aluminum wheels with Eagle F1 Asymmetric 3 run-flat tires.

2016 Camaro In Depth



» The center console was designed for shifting. An electric parking brake switch and repositioning of the cup holders makes it easier to bang gears. Chevrolet was listening to its customers on this one.

DESIGN DETAILS

At a glance, the design of the 2016 Camaro may seem evolutionary, but there are some serious details in it that become more apparent when you see it in the flesh. Chevrolet says it's more sculpted and we have to agree. From the various planes seen in the hood to even the form of the outside mirrors, there is tremendous attention to detail in it. There's definitely some C7 Corvette in the details, giving it a familial look, too.

Dimensionally, the new Camaro is slightly trimmer in all exterior dimensions – and notably in a nearly 2-inch reduction in wheelbase – but the overall effect is more dramatic, particularly with an almost fastback profile. It simply looks lean and taught.

The Camaro SS has a unique front fascia with integrated brake cooling ducts and a unique hood with functional air vents, which improve engine cooling and reduce front lift. It also has a specific rear spoiler. The hood vents don't simply provide an exit point for hot underhood air. They funnel air drawn through the grille out and over the car, which improves performance because it prevents the air



» Like the exterior, the new cockpit ratchets up the attention to detail. Elements such as the specific diameter of the flat-bottom steering wheel are not shared with other Chevys. The instrument cluster is all new, too, and features a large, color digital readout between the tach and speedometer.

from being forced under the car, where it can cause lift.

Standard lighting includes halogen projector beam headlamps and taillamps. RS and SS models add HID projector-beam headlamps and LED “signature lighting” daytime running lights – including a sweeping LED light pipe integrated in the headlamp and an LED light pipe integrated into the front fascia. RS and SS models also feature LED lighting for the rear taillamps, including auxiliary LED light guides that mirror the shape of the front signature lighting.

There's also a new interpretation of the Camaro's iconic red, white, and blue “banner” insignia, displayed on the front fenders. We are told it was pushed by the Chevy design studio's younger members, who thought the nod to earlier generations was wholly appropriate. We agree.

INTERIOR DETAILS

Like the exterior, the 2016 Camaro's interior is completely new. In many ways, it represents a greater departure in style and functionality, too. The instrument panel, for example, retains the familiar dual-binnacle-style hood over the instruments, but the rest of it has been completely redesigned. Gone, too, is the cute but ergonomically challenged retro gauge panel in the center console.

As with many cars these days, the gauge panel is a mix of analog instruments and digital readouts. In the Camaro, there's a big, 8-inch high-def screen in some models and it's matched by another 8-inch screen for the MyLink “infotainment” system. Like many other Chevys for 2016, it is compatible with Apple's CarPlay, which means you can plug your iPhone in and “project” many of its controls and apps to the MyLink screen. Again, progress can be a wonderful thing.

There's also a new center console that shows Chevrolet was listening to its more enthusiastic Gen 5 owners. It is designed

Camaro Comparison Chart: 2016 vs. 2015

	2016 Camaro	2015 Camaro
Length	188.3 in.	190.6 in.
Width	74.7 in.	75.5 in.
Height	53.1 in.	54.2 in.
Wheelbase	110.7 in.	112.3 in.
Front track	63 in. (SS)	63.6 in. (SS)
Rear track	62.9 in. (SS)	63.9 in. (SS)

» The rear view shows an almost fastback-like roofline and highly detailed, Corvette-inspired taillights. SS and LT/RS models feature LED lighting for the taillights.



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2016 Camaro In Depth



➤ Early driving impressions in a V-6-powered preproduction model were impressive. The lighter, more agile car pulls hard with 335 hp.

➤ Greater use of aluminum suspension components further contributes to the Camaro's weight loss – and they even honeycombed some of the suspension links for further savings. Overall, suspension weight is reduced by 26 pounds.



specifically for easier shifting with a manual transmission, thanks to a repositioned armrest and the elimination of the mechanical, pull-up parking brake. In its place is a simple switch for an electric parking brake.

Chevy was apparently listening to all that feedback at tuner events, because there's also a new LED ambient lighting system with 24 different colors that can be switched to a car show mode when the car is parked. It creates a theatrical light show that we can only assume will be hacked to strobe in rhythm to bands like, well ... we're too old-school to hazard a guess. Kids today and their music. Let's just move on to the engines.

CAMARO LT POWERTRAINS

The Gen 6 Camaro will be offered with six powertrain combinations and there ain't a compromise in the bunch.

The aforementioned 2.0L turbo is standard and rated at 275 horsepower and 295 lb-ft of torque. When the thing is on boost, it offers a wide torque band with 90 percent of peak torque available from 2,100 rpm to 3,000 rpm – and maximum torque from 3,000 to 4,500 rpm. Chevy says that's strong enough for 0-60 mph acceleration in

less than 6 seconds, while enabling 30 mpg. What's not to like, right?

The all-new 3.6L V-6 is optional in the LT and is rated at 335 horsepower and 284 lb-ft of torque. It features direct injection, variable valve timing and, for the first time, Active Fuel Management (cylinder deactivation), which disables two cylinders. The 2.0L turbo and 3.6L engines are offered with a standard six-speed manual transmission or GM's all-new 8L45 paddle-shift eight-speed automatic transmission, which is based on the eight-speed design introduced in the Corvette and fullsize trucks.

We spent a little time in preproduction V-6 models and came away impressed. Very impressed, in fact. With more power than the previous V-6 channeled into a lighter, more agile chassis, the effect is enlightening. Power delivery is strong and immediate, with a strong feeling of torque at low rpm. We look forward to driving the SS, but the V-6-powered LT is no slouch.

LT1-POWERED CAMARO SS

Of course, the Camaro SS is powered by the 6.2L LT1 V-8 engine introduced with the Corvette Stingray. About 20 percent of the components are specific for

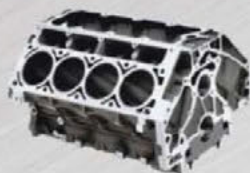
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AD #CH21315

2016 Camaro In Depth



► The all-new engine lineup for Camaro features (left to right) the small-block 6.2L V-8 LT1 (455 hp), an all-new 3.6L V-6 (335 hp), and an Ecotec 2.0L turbocharged four-cylinder (275 hp). All three engines feature a direct injection fuel system and continuously variable valve timing.

the Camaro's architecture, including new, tubular "tri-Y"-type exhaust manifolds. And yes, it also employs variable valve timing, direct injection, and Active Fuel Management (on automatic-equipped models). Output is 455 horsepower and 455 lb-ft of torque, making it the most-powerful standard V-8 ever in a Camaro.

The LT1 engine is available with a standard Tremec TR6060 six-speed manual transmission that borrows the Active Rev Match technology from the Corvette's seven-speed manual. It "blips" the throttle automatically on downshifts. It's very

effective, but a little disconcerting the first time you use it. The Hydra-Matic 8L90 paddle-shift eight-speed automatic is optional.

Also like the Corvette, the LT1 (and 3.6L V-6) is available with a dual-mode exhaust, which features electronically controlled valves that bypass the mufflers under acceleration, uncorking the engine and more importantly enhancing the sound level. You can even personalize the exhaust sound, from a "Stealth" mode to the most aggressive "Track" mode.

All of the new Camaro's powertrains

sound enticing in their own ways – and we're very much interested in what tuners will do with the turbocharged four-banger. Moreover, the promise of the sixth-generation car's stronger yet lighter chassis and a more driver-focused cockpit are attributes that, on paper, should make it the best Camaro ever.

With nearly half a century of history behind it, that's a huge legacy to build upon. Our confidence is high, based on our initial impressions, and we look forward to putting those impressions to the test. We'll keep you posted. **CHP**

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GOIN' WIDE

Increasing Wheelwell Real Estate with a Pre-fabbed Mini-tub Kit

✦ TEXT & PHOTOS: **Steven Rupp**

Big back tires have been a part of hot rodding since way back before most of us were driving. In the past, the big-tire craze was driven by the Pro Street and drag scenes, but today it's infiltrated the Pro Touring segment. Here, big tires are more than just an aesthetic deal, they help with traction, and when you're trying to fly around a corner, traction is "numero uno."

The problem is that most of our old Chevys weren't designed to accommodate wide rubber, or at least what's considered wide today. It may be possible for you to shoehorn in a 295, but that's a dainty tire compared to the 315- and 335mm wide behemoths in vogue today. Drag racers would just fab up massive inner wheeltubs to hold their drag tires, but unless you're rollin' Pro Street then that falls into the "overkill" category. What's really needed to get big tires under your Pro Touring ride are mini-tubs. As the name implies they are a lot like full tubs, just

smaller. Chris Alston's Chassisworks has recently released a mini-tub kit for 1967-'69 Camaros, and one nice perk is that they include pre-cut closeout panels that makes trimming down the frame quite a bit easier.

To see what's involved, we loaded up our gear and headed over to Best of Show Coach Works in Escondido, California, where they were getting ready to graft a pair into a 1967 Camaro. **CHP**



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01 | Here's the passenger-side wheel tub from the Chris Alston's Chassisworks mini-tub kit (PN 5913-F10). The 18-gauge steel tub provides for an additional 2.5 inches of clearance and will accommodate 315- or 335mm section width tires. A unique aspect of the Chassisworks kit is that it includes pre-cut and laser-etched closeout panels to save fabrication time when patching up the required frame notches.



02 | If your car is together, you'll need to pull most of the interior and remove the fuel tank. We didn't have that issue, so we started marking and cutting.



03 | With the line marked about 2.5 inches out from the OE wheel tub edge, we broke out the cutoff wheel and got to work. The section we cut away contains the upper shock mount, so mini-tubs are only for cars with aftermarket coilover-type suspensions or ones where the upper shock mount has been relocated. We were careful not to damage the trunk hinge bracket since it'll need to be removed from the old wheel tub and welded to the new one.



04 | It was easier to take the tub out of the car in sections. We opted for a cutoff wheel, but you could use an air chisel or even a plasma cutter if you want. It's better to cut too small and have to trim-to-fit rather than to cut too big and have to fill large gaps.



05 | Here's the main section of wheel tub we removed. To get the trunk hinge bracket off, we drilled out the spot welds and carefully removed it. In the end, this bracket will be welded to the new tub.



06 | With the stock tub out of the way we were able to finish trimming away the metal. Remember, it's better to cut off too little than too much.

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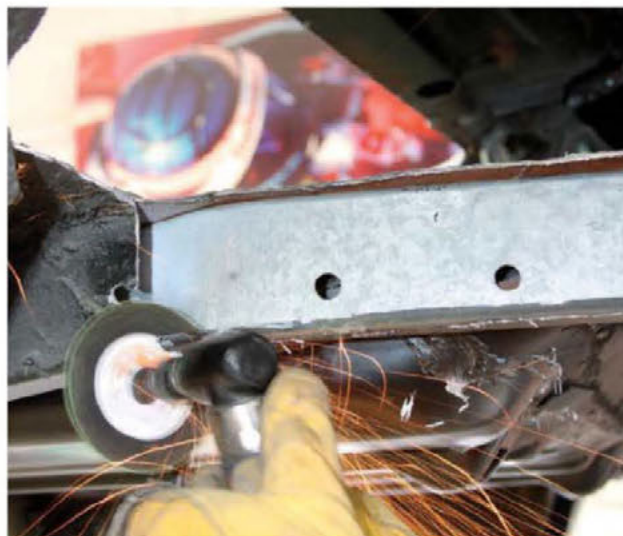




07 | The section containing the old upper shock mount was then removed.



08 | And here's the resulting hole with the old wheel tub out of the way.



09 | To maximize tire fitment, the frame also needs to be thinned down a bit. Following the instructions, we marked the frame and started cutting.



10 | Here are the two areas of the passenger-side frame after being cut away.



11 | This is where the pre-cut closeout panels came into play.



12 | Where needed, the closeout panels have laser-etched guide marks to help make bending them easier.

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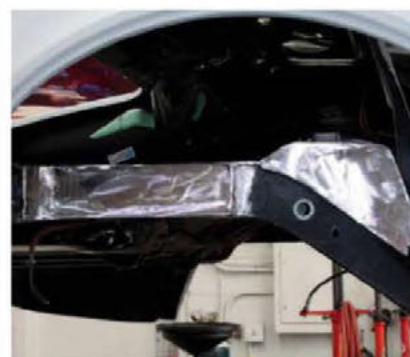
13 | Here are the closeout panels tack-welded in place. Notice how the pre-drilled hole in the front panel lines up with the framerrail edge. This made doing the small rosette even easier.



14 | We then busted out our Miller 211 MIG welder and stitched everything in place.



15 | And here are the two panels fully welded in place. This gives us the extra tire clearance we need, and the frame is actually stronger than when we started.



16 | We then went back and ground down all the welds. Once seam-sealed and painted, the area will look like it came from the factory this way.



17 | Prior to installing the Chassisworks mini-tub, we prepped it by grinding off the paint and drilling out holes for welding.



18 | The new mini-tub was then slid into place. If it had not fit, we would have pulled it back out, trimmed a little, and then tried again.



19 | To hold the mini-tub in place prior to welding, we used a combination of locking pliers and self-tapping screws.



20 | Here's the mini-tub in place and prepped for final welding.

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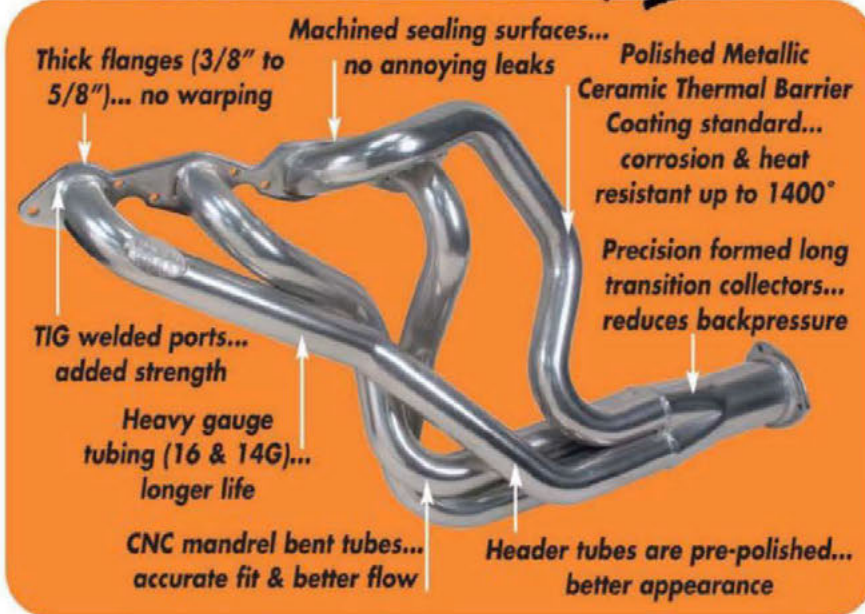


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CONCEPT ONE

:Goin' Wide



21 | We then got to work with our MIG welder. Much of the welding is from inside the wheelwell, but the upper flange was welded from inside the car and trunk.



22 | And this is the mini-tub fully stitched in place. All of this will eventually be seam-sealed and undercoated.



23 | The driver-side tub was done in much the same way. Here it is welded, sealed, and given a coat of Eastwood Chassis Black paint.



24 | We also made a couple of these small plates to brace the seatback metal to the new tubs. The install took a solid two days, and aside from some welding supplies and paint, we didn't need anything other than the Chassisworks kit.

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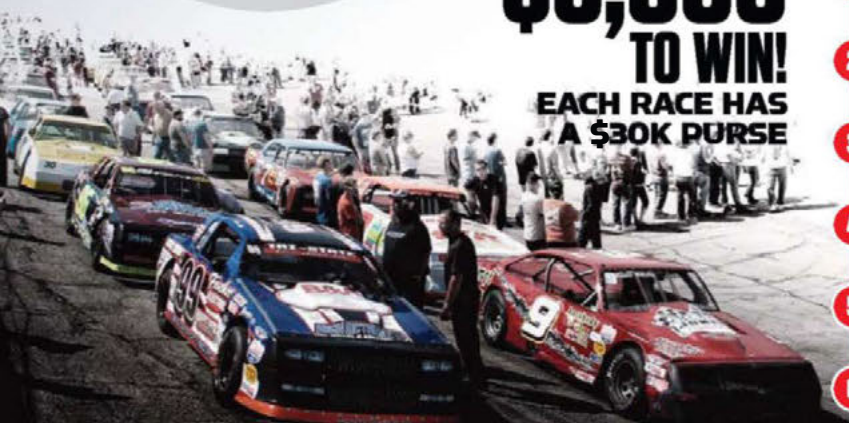




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RIDES

YOUTH BRIGADE

Sean Berardi's 1967 Camaro
Combines NASCAR Inspiration and
Pro Touring Finesse

► **These days it's a rare** occasion when a 19-year-old gravitates toward '60's muscle when it comes to fulfilling his automotive driving ambition. It's more common for today's teens to steer clear from classic hot rods that generally appeal to a generation or two prior to today's teens—you know, someone born in the '60s instead of a kid who first saw light during the height of Seattle's grunge music scene. Well, Sean Berardi isn't much for following the generational template mapped out by his fellow high school graduates. Nope. Dude beats to his own drum, and not in your typical 4/4 fashion, either.



Although Sean was born a few years shy of the century's turn, his interests would suggest he has more in common with the likes of those who blast early Van Halen, Scorpions, or Thin Lizzy more so than those booming synthetic bass notes through a pair of 15-inch subs piled in the back of a turbo-lagged Subaru.

With Sean's muscle car taste reaching way back to the first-gen F-body, the Petaluma, California, resident headed north to Medford, Oregon, to pick up a 1967 Camaro, which came decked out in full-on drag racing trim. Although neck-snapping acceleration was an attractive element to the Camaro, his intentions were to have a car that could stretch the lateral-g limits as well.



♦ TEXT: Nick Licata | PHOTOS: Liz Miles ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



Starting with the suspension, Sean acquired a Chris Alston's Chassisworks subframe and bolted up a set of Chassisworks lowering spindles and a coilover system featuring VariShocks and 450lb VariSprings up front. Out back, a Heidts four-link assembly accommodates the Chassisworks coilover system armed with VariShocks and 200lb springs. Wilwood six-piston binders with 14-inch rotors on all four corners peek from behind a set of black AZA Feeler Z2 rollers (18x8.5 front, 18x10 rear) wrapped in BFG Rival rubber (245/35 front, 275/35 rear).





Keller Motor Supply (Medford, Oregon) built the NASCAR-inspired 370ci stroker that features 12.5:1 Wiseco slugs, a forged steel crank, Keith Black rods, and a COMP 285 cam. Like a banned substance for athletes, NASCAR outlawed the Pontiac heads found capping the mill, but northern California is far from NASCAR country, so their rules don't apply. Milodon Megaflow valves, Isky valvesprings, Crowder roller rockers, and COMP pushrods were good to go.

A Holley 750-cfm carb sits atop a Chevrolet Performance intake manifold while an MSD 6ALN ignition provides the fire. A Ron Davis aluminum radiator is committed to cooler engine temps, and a pair of Sanderson ceramic-coated headers dump waste into a set of Flowmaster mufflers.

Sean estimates his NASCAR-banned workhorse carries the F-body to the tune of about 700 hp and 650 lb-ft of torque—easily potent enough to stretch the car's limits around any road course or autocross.

A Tremec TKO 600 five-speed, McLeod II hydraulic clutch, and Hurst shifter ensure quick-like gear changes. A Currie rearend houses 4.11 gears and 31-spline axles, and readily accepts the tire-abusing torque handed down by the 3.5-inch Mark Williams Enterprises driveshaft.

With the bodywork and paint completely in check, Sean was content with the flashy red pigment and moved on to the interior mods. Not much was

missing here, yet he added his own flavor by way of Corbeau seats and Flaming River tilt column and black-wrapped Waterfall steering wheel. An Auto Meter gauge panel hosts the informants to keep Sean in tune with the car's performance. A Chassisworks rollbar offers additional chassis stiffness and safety while a Crow Enterprises four-point harness secures the driver and passenger.

Keeping a young muscle car enthusiast in line can offer some challenges, but Sean's parents ensure certain goals are met before the ignition key ever gets a twist. "I have to maintain a 3.0 GPA or the car stays in the garage," confesses Sean. "I play on the college golf team, too, so I don't have as much time to drive the car as I'd like to, but grades come first, and I'm OK with that. It just makes me try harder."

Thus far, he's made the grades and enjoys spending weekends at USCA, Hooked on Driving, and Goodguys autocross events. The car definitely takes a beating, but that's exactly what it was built to do.

It's great when our classic muscle car world gains another member of the younger generation, and when Sean Berardi isn't driving golf balls down a fairway, there's a good chance you'll find him dodging cones at the local driving event ... well, as long as he maintains that 3.0 GPA. **CHP**



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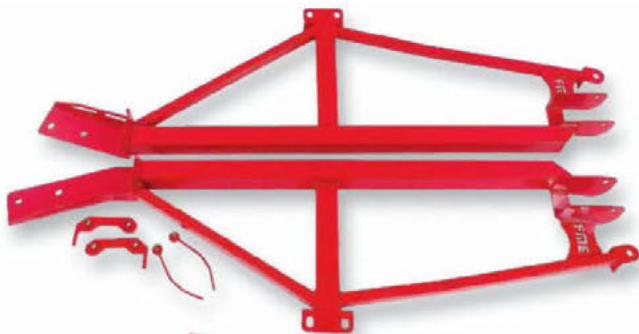
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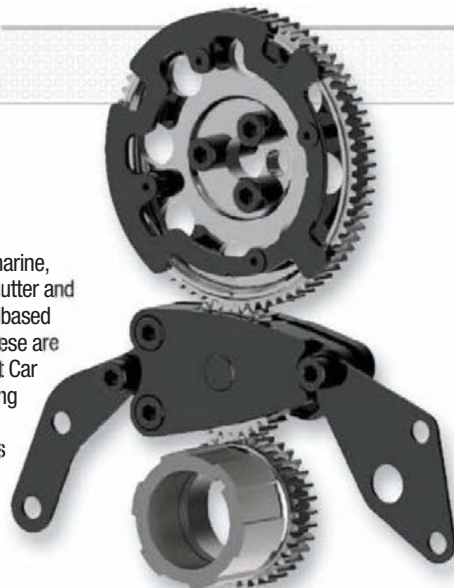
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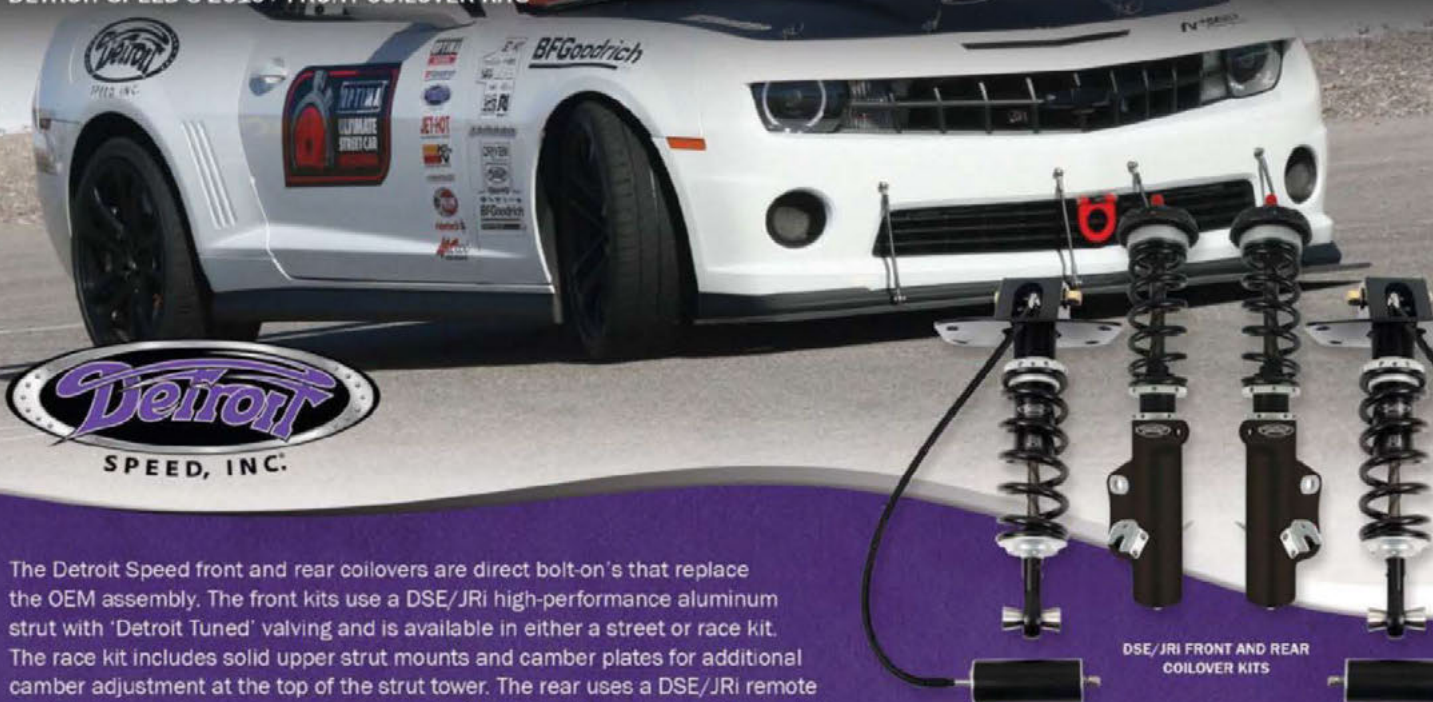
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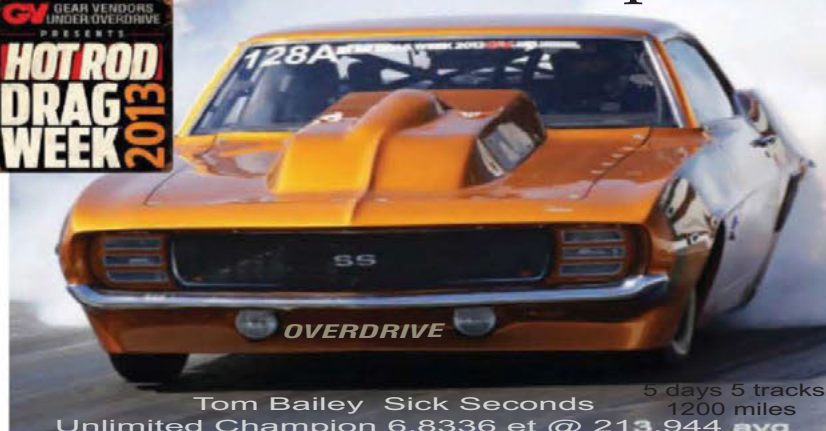
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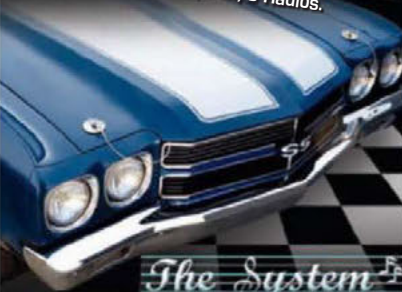
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JUST SAYIN

BY: Dennis Pittsenbarger



Street Racing

►What is it about street racing that carries so much appeal? Is it the lure of pretending to be someone's favorite movie star? Maybe their idol from days gone by? Maybe you have no fear of watching your car be destroyed by the crusher. Aspirations of total street domination? Possibly. No matter the case, in today's atmosphere of right versus wrong, street racing is under the microscope whether competitors like it or not.

I'm not going to take the stand of "do as I say, not as I do" and tell you that I'm some saint that did not take part in street racing – heck, I got my share of tickets for both "exhibition of speed" and "speed competition" in and around the Portland metropolitan area, but somewhere along the way, I either grew up or just started balancing the risk versus reward equation differently ... and that is what I think is part of the draw.

Young, invincible, and certainly thoughts of being incapable of incarceration is why I believe most street racing is a young man's sport. Surely there are plenty of seasoned street racers still trolling for their next stoplight conquest, and yes, there are plenty of part-time street racers moonlighting in between track days, but both sides are always looking for their next race (in my 44-year-old opinion) without the worries of being on the 5-o'clock news and explaining to (in my case) a 9-year-old daughter what Daddy is doing in the back of a police cruiser.

And that is the question I wanted to ask.

Why go street racing if facing the risks? What is the draw? Is it the race, the adrenaline, the conquest, and the credibility that you are the fastest on your local streets that day? For me it was worth the risk as long as I came out on top. Sadly, I was neither fast nor "slick" enough to get away with much and usually counted on my communication skills to get me out of a jam with the local law enforcement representative.

Now, let's talk television. I'm lucky enough to have met several of the key players on *Street Outlaws*, and for the most part they are all stand-up guys who for whatever reason have been wrapped up in this production and seemingly "real street racing" for what is now coming up on their third (or is it fourth) season ... and I for one love it! It's fun and gritty, and if you're not the typical "cyber-hater" fan of the staged racing that is a pledge to portray street racing in a good light, you might like it, too.

Sorry, but even in getting to know some of the racers on the show, they chuckle at the fact that people are in denial, and it could be that there is no "magic fairy" setting up sets of industrial lights along the roadside and the ambulance sitting in the background is not a pumpkin drawn by the local field mice. And they are positive that the local police are not closing roads off to make sure traffic is not interacting with a race. And FYI, since no stones are thrown in the glass house of television, do you really think that we built cars in five days in Florida? It was 12 cars in 80 days to be honest, but that's another story.

And then there's the silver screen and all its magical powers. And with it

come the responsibilities of being in control of young men's (and women's) dreams. And even more responsibility comes with the glorification of the lack of consequences once behind the wheel of anything from a Yugo to an exotic, let alone the well-

sharpened weapon of the street racer in the heat of competition on a boulevard near you.

All it proves is the simple truth that real car enthusiasts have been and will always be competitive. If that is understood, then you will also understand the reason

why there will always be street racing and the lanes at the local dragstrip will always be full. Call it "boys will be boys," call it "racers will be racers," but make no mistake, if there is a stop sign, handkerchief, flashlight, or Christmas Tree, and it holds with it the thrill of blasting acceleration, there will be racing, both on the street and on the track.

I'm just sayin'

Dennis Pittsenbarger



Dennis Pittsenbarger is an automotive industry expert, television personality, car restorer, racer, and walking encyclopedia of automotive history always on the hunt for his next great set of wheels.

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